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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/033,970	12/20/2001	Karl Hansen	24,954-25	9112

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EXAMINER

AMIRI, NAHID

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3679

DATE MAILED: 06/30/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/033,970

Applicant(s)

HANSEN, KARL

Examiner

Nahid Amiri

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 03 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 April 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3,4,6,10,11,13,14 and 20-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 20-24 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3,4,6,10,11,13,14, 25, and 26 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 21 March 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

In view of Applicant's Amendment received 11 April 2006, amendments to the claims have been entered. Claims 2, 5, 7-9, 12, and 15-19 are canceled. Claims 20-24 stand withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11, 13, 14, 20-25 are pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11, 13, 14, 25, and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent No. 6,474,920 B2 Lin.

With respect to claim 1, Lin discloses an apparatus for coupling (Fig. 2-3) comprising a first generally planar member (5) having a pair of generally opposed surfaces and an aperture (54) therebetween disposed at an engaging region; a coupling member (4) having an external thread set and having a complementary portion 58 for engaging the aperture of the planar member; and a non-planar member (7) having an internal thread set adapted to engage the external thread set of the coupling member thereby connecting the non-planar member to the first planar member, wherein portions of the pair of generally opposed surfaces of the planar member extend into the thread set of the non-planar member. Lin does not disclose that the slot has a oblong shape. Oblong shaped slots are known to provide adjustability to enable accommodation of tolerances when aligning holes on adjacent members. Therefore, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to one of ordinary skill in the art to have the slot of Lin as an

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oblong shape in order to enable quick assembly and accommodation of manufacturing tolerances.

With respect to claim 3, Lin discloses (Figs. 1-3) that the aperture (54) is formed in a region adjacent an edge portion of the first planar member.

With respect to claim 4, Lin discloses the claimed invention except for the planar member having more than one slot. However, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention was made to consider that, the duplicating the components has been consistently held that mere duplication of the essential working parts of device involves only routine skill in the art. *St. Regis Paper Co. V. Bemis Co.*, 193 USPQ 8. Accordingly, it would have been an obvious duplication of parts to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide Lin with more than one slot so as to enable adjustable assembly and provide for an duplicative effect.

With respect to claim 6, Lin discloses (Figs. 1-3) that the coupling member has a larger diameter dimension than a thickness dimension of the first planar member.

With respect to claim 10, Lin discloses an apparatus for connecting two members together (Figs. 1-3) comprising a first member (5) having a pair of centrally opposed major surfaces and defining an engaging region, and a slot (54) disposed at said engaging region, an elongate threaded coupling member 4 having an external thread set and an engaging portion (58) for engaging the slot of the first member, said threaded coupling member removably engaging the slot; and a second member 7 having an internal thread set sized to cooperate with the external thread set of the threaded coupling member, wherein said external thread set of the threaded coupling member is threadedly received within the internal thread set, wherein portions of the first member extend into the internal thread set of the second member. Lin does not disclose that the slot has a oblong shape. Oblong shaped slots are known to provide adjustability to enable accommodation of tolerances when aligning holes on adjacent members. Therefore, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to one of ordinary skill in the art to have the slot of Lin as an oblong shape in order to enable quick assembly and accommodation of manufacturing tolerances.

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With respect to claim 11, Lin discloses (Figs. 1-3) that the elongate threaded coupling member (4) is two longitudinal portions of a threaded shank each having a threaded exterior surface and a substantially flat interior surface.

With respect to claim 13, Lin discloses (Figs. 1-3) wherein the thickness of the first member is less than a diameter of the internal thread set.

With respect to claim 14, Lin discloses an apparatus for joining two members via a threaded coupling member (Figs. 1-3), the apparatus comprising a first member (5) having an aperture (54) disposed proximate an edge; an elongate threaded coupling member having an external thread set (40) and an engaging portion (58) corresponding to the aperture of the first member, said threaded coupling member removably engaging the aperture and extending away from the edge of the first member (6), and a second member (7) having an internal thread set sized to cooperate with the external thread set of the threaded coupling member, said internal thread set operatively receiving a portion of both the external thread set of the threaded coupling member and a portion of the first member to secularly bind the first member to the second member. Lin does not disclose that the slot has a oblong shape. Oblong shaped slots are known to provide adjustability to enable accommodation of tolerances when aligning holes on adjacent members. Therefore, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to one of ordinary skill in the art to have the slot of Lin as an oblong shape in order to enable quick assembly and accommodation of manufacturing tolerances.

With respect to claim 25, Lin discloses (Figs. 1-3) that the elongate threaded coupling member (4) is two longitudinal portions of a threaded shank each having an threaded exterior surface and a substantially flat interior surface.

With respect to claim 26, Lin discloses (Figs. 1-3) that the thickness of the first member is less than a diameter of the internal thread set.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 11 April 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

With respect to claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11, 13, 14, 25, and 26 of applicants' argument that the "slot" of the planer member is not "oblong". Examiner responds that 1) the oblong slot is well-known in the art to restrain the movement of a member when a coupling member extends through the oblong passage. 2) Applicant shows no criticality is associated with the choice of slot being as "an oblong". Therefore, The

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action, e.g. claim 1, lines 2-3, the limitation of "an oblong" slot, was not claimed in original claimed invention. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Nahid Amiri whose telephone number is (571) 272-8113. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30-5:30. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel P. Stodola can be reached on (571) 272-

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7087. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

na

Nahid Amiri
Examiner
Art Unit 3679
June 20, 2006

Daniel P Stodola

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